The

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

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Notes of the Month.

It will be a matter of heartfelt regret to many of our readers that this year it has been found necessary to discontinue the Sunday School Conference. For many years the latter proved one of the most helpful and attractive of our assemblies. But with it, as with so many other normal activities, the War has interfered. The difficulty of catering for a large party, the increased cost and inconvenience of railway travelling, compelled our friends at Larne to defer till happier days their offer of hospitality. We sincerely trust that the interval will not be a long one, and that it may be possible in the near future to resume these pleasant gatherings of Sunday School workers.

* *

As some compensation for foregoing the above function, the Annual Meetings in connection with the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church should prove unusually interesting and attractive. This will be largely due to the presence thereat of Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter, of Oxford. He has undertaken to preach the annual sermon in the First Church, and to lecture the following day on "Religion During the War and After." To suit his convenience, and permit of his return to England to fulfil important engagements there, the Annual Meetings will be held a day earlier in the week, i.e., on Monday and Tuesday, June 17th and 18th. We have no doubt that Dr. Carpenter will receive the heartiest of welcomes and attract large audiences. No man has served our cause better, or in more varied capacities. Always a strenuous and conscientious worker, he has shown no decrease of devotion since he relinquished his important duties as Principal of Manchester College, Oxford. Quite recently he has visited various centres in England and Scotland, and on such occasions has proved a source of encouragement and inspiration. We can therefore hope great things from his visit, and would earnestly appeal to all our readers to do their part in making our annual gatherings this year thoroughly successful. For full details of the various gatherings, we would refer them to the customary preliminary announcements. These will indicate that Dr. Carpenter has undertaken a full programme of work in the North of Ireland We must do all we can to make him feel that it is well worth while.

* *

That it is good to have visits from friends of other lands many Belfast people will readily agree, particularly the members of our two congregations

for whom Dr. J. P. MacCarthy preached on May 19th. They and members of other congregations were greatly pleased with his services, while those who met him in more intimate intercourse carried away very pleasant impressions of his attractive personality. New England has contributed many great gifts to the cause of our liberal faith, and we are grateful to them for its latest representative, and for his testimony to the things we hold in common. We are hoping that in our next issue Dr. MacCarthy will contribute some account of the impressions he received while in our midst.

* *

Following in the footsteps of our ministers who have already rendered valuable service as Y.M.C.A. workers in France, others from the North of Ireland will soon take up similar work. Already we have heard of three of our younger ministers who have made their application, and have gained the consent of their congregations to the contemplated step. Fuller particulars will be more fitting when definite arrangements have been actually made. Meantime, we mention the above fact with gladness as indicative of the fact that the exemption of ministers from military service implies no unreadiness on the part of our ministers to undertake voluntarily most valuable work at the Front. We wish them every success in their endeavours.

A Thought for the Month

THE MESSAGE OF JESUS

"He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes."—Matt. vii. 29.

"The eternal Gospel must tell us true things about the two beings in whose right relations lies the pledge of our highest progress, God and man. The essence of the message of Jesus is that God is Father and mankind are sons. Always and everywhere he offers free and open access for all his children. Always and everywhere he pours forth the same abundant grace to all who will receive it, unconfined within 'chartered channels,' unlimited by anything save our own folly and indolence, our stubbornness or sin. Forgiveness is ever ready, inasmuch as it is rooted in the very nature of God. But it is not unconditional. The fellowship into which we are called offers high privileges, but it also makes great demands. It cuts off at one stroke all satisfactions of the divine will by outward acts, and throws men back with unswerving determination on the life of inward purity and truth. It claims from all the continuous service of thankfulness and humility. It claims for all the fullest recognition of an ultimate worth in the divine eye, so that to minister to the lowest is the duty of the most exhalted. It has its stern and severe side towards the unloving, the self-righteous, the wilfully blind, but to the suffering and the sorrowful it comes with inexpressible comfort and peace in the will of God. So the gospel appeals to us from its human side as the interpretation ofthe experience of Jesus. Whatever final purport it may have on the divine side as an instrument of revelation in the education of the race, here is the testimony of one who knew the world, and tasted joy and anguish in their utmost strength. Here is the witness of a man who looked into the heart of failure and death, and saw that through them God was for ever realising his purposes of progress, and compassing paths of darkness with everlasting light. The teaching of Jesus is the product of his own inner life, and in its simplest and universal elements it offers a knowledge which is within reach of all. It implicitly asserts that the way to understand Jesus is to be like him. It bids men purify their hearts, and they shall see with his vision. It summons men to face evil with his trust if they would win his victories. This promise has been fulfilled again and again in the direst struggles of defeat and pain. And so he is still the Master of those who believe and aspire, those who love and hope.

THE NECESSITY FOR NON-SUBSCRIPTION.

*A CRITICISM OF PROFESSOR DAVEY'S ASSEMBLY'S COLLEGE LECTURE.**

BY
REV. E. H. PICKERING, M.A., Oxon.

"To each one is given the manifestation of the spirit to profit withal."
—I. Cor. xii. 7.

OUR CHURCH—NON-SUBSCRIBING OR UNITARIAN?

So corrupted has the human mind become through age-long servitude to various theological shibboleths, that it is exceedingly difficult for most professing Christians to regard Christianity other than as a particular mode of theological belief. Even many of the presumably enlightened members of churches such as this and its kindred, feel at the back of their minds that what distinguishes us from orthodoxy is a particular doxy of their own called Unitarianism. They know, of course, that the name of our body of churches in Ireland is Non-Subscribing Presbyterian, but they are inclined to ask, "why use this long and ungainly name when 'Unitarian' is so much more convenient?" They fail to see that "Non-Subscribing Presbyterian" expresses the foundation of our Church, whilst "Unitarian" is only a peculiar kind of belief held by many of our members; and that they are only able to hold this belief honestly because our basis, which asks no subscription to this creed or that from ministers or members, leaves them free to hold it—just as it leaves all our members free to believe whatever they like, providing they acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church, and do not seek to impose their beliefs on other members. In other words, the basis of this Non-Subscribing Church is, or endeavours to be so truly Christian as to comprehand all those Christians, whether Trinitarians, Calvinists, Arminians, Unitarians, or what not, who feel at home with our order of service and system of government. There is no justification whatever for calling the church Unitarian. The most that can be urged is, that the bulk of our members are Unitarians, but this implies either that we have no further interest in any future theological development, or else that we are convinced that no future theological development can go beyond Unitarianism; and, at the same time, it puts all other forms of Christian belief definitely in the wrong. But if this is not intolerant dogmatism, what is it? At once the majority of our members hasten to repudiate it. They fervently insist that they are progressive; they modestly admit the possibility that Unitarianism may not be the last word, and charitably declare that other Christian beliefs may not be altogether wrong, although they themselves cannot agree with them.

OUR OBLIGATION TO POSTERITY.

This, however, is the essence of my claim for keeping our Church in name and fact Non-Subscribing. We, at the present day, are entitled to hold Unitarian views if we are Unitarians, or Trinitarian views if we are Trinitarians, just because there is no demand for subscription to either one or other or any form of belief. Those of the future, who may or may not hold views similar to ours, must have this freedom from subscription maintained as their sacred inheritance, so that they may not be denied the privilege of thinking for themselves which we have enjoyed. It is as a solemn duty to Christian posterity that this Church must be true to its free principles.

NON-SUBSCRIPTION THE ONLY BASIS OF CHRISTIAN RE-UNION.

Moreover, when so much talk is going on about the re-union of the Churches, we should be criminals if we sacrificed what will ultimately prove to be the

*"The Church's Interpretation of Christ," delivered by Professor J. E. Davey, at the Assembly's College, Belfast, 11th April, 1918.

only basis of re-union. Religion would be damaged, rather than helped, if some specious re-union were achieved by the mere device of whittling down the creeds until every Church had lost its peculiar character. There will never be a healthy re-union until all Christians realize that what they have to agree upon is not this creed or that, but that the headship of Christ is sufficient, leaving each man and each Church free to develop according to their own particular capacities. "To each one is given the manifestation of the spirit to profit withal," declared St. Paul to those who were disposed to insist that their particular gifts were the only authentic ones. Each man and each Church is called upon to do its best in its own particular way. Therefore, in the future, when the re-union comes, all Churches will agree in being Christians; they will refrain from calling themselves by dogmatic names (whether Trinitarian or Unitarian) because that would exclude many as being non-Christians, and the only difference will be in the order of service, the system of government, and the traditions and habits of their membership. Since, then, the Church of the future will be non-subscribing, it is our duty to keep true to our principles, and do all we can to hasten the coming of the re-united Church by stretching our the hand of fellowship to all other Churches where the principle of non-subscription is gaining ground.

PROFESSOR DAVEY GIVES UP ALL EXCLUSIVE DOGMATIC CLAIMS.

Much of what I have said is, I know, old stuff to many of you, but I repeat it because it has a present application. The other day, at the closing of the session at Assembly's College, a remarkable address was given by the brilliant young Professor J. E. Davey, on "The Church's Interpretation of Jesus Christ." In the very title of the address, the foundations of a Church built on the Westminster Confession (or any Church built on a dogmatic system), are shaken. In the opening paragraph the whole structure comes toppling down, and the rest of the address consists in crushing the whole dogmatic system to dust. For, to admit, as the Professor does, in company with all modern critics of repute, that there has been no one final and complete interpretation of the fact of Jesus, but that different ages have laid stress on different features, and brought new elements to light, is to show the folly of attempting to set up any one particular interpretation as the basis of Christian discipleship. So impressed is he with the wonderful variety of the interpretations of Jesus by those whom we cannot but call Christians, that he is moved to make the following significant statement: — "*Dr Carnegie Simpson has defined a Christian broadly as 'one who is responding to whatever meanings of the fact of Christ are being brought home to his conscience by the Spirit of God,'*† and a survey of Christian theology helps us to realize that no age has had a monopoly of the truth regarding Christ, or has even stated more than a portion of it. The interpretation of Christ by any age may truly be spoken of as its gospel, and a comparative study of the Christian gospel will not be without its advantages in helping us to appreciate the gospel of our day, what it is, and what it ought to be."

EVERY AGE MUST INTERPRET JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO ITS NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS.

I can scarcely imagine anything broader. Thus, to Professor Davey a Christian is not one who is bound down to a particular creed, but one who responds to the fact of Christ, and seeks in his own soul to give expression to that fact by his thought and deed. Again, the claim of any Church to have a monopoly of Christian truth is unflinchingly denied, and in that denial is involved the assertion that a Church cannot be truly Christian which excludes anyone who responds in any way to the fact of Christ. Applying this teaching to the present day, Professor Davey makes the point that unless the interpretation of Christ

† Italics mine.

which the Church presents is one that is best qualified to meet the spiritual needs of the day, that Church fails in its Christian Mission. He says we must have a living Christology. "Each age of the Christian Church must find its ideal, its Saviour, and its Master, in Jesus of Nazareth; but men of each age, with their own peculiar circumstances, needs, and aspirations, must nevertheless interpret Him for themselves. That is certainly the lesson of the Church's history, and the test of the matter is surely the spiritual success of the Church in the age under consideration." Then he proceeds to point to the failure of the Church to-day, because it has not developed or varied its Christology according to the times.

(To be continued).

Memorial Notices.

MISS MARGARET CUNNINGHAM

The death of Miss Margaret Cunningham, of Boltnaconnel, which took place at the Manse, Crumlin, removes a link with the past dear to the heart of every member of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, and deprives us of one of a family with which the cause of Irish Non-Subscription has for generations been associated. When we go back to the days of the "Plantation of Ulster," we find that in Killead her Scottish ancestors settled some three hundred years ago, bringing with them the influence of the old Scottish Confession of Faith, which in later years was supplanted by the Westminster Confession. The story is a long and interesting one.

Amongst the early Scottish settlers was a member of the great Ayrshire family of Montgomery, which has as its motto, "Garde Bien." To this motto the Killead Montgomerys have been true so far as their religion was concerned. Montgomery, of Boltnaconnel, obtained a grant of upwards of one thousand acres of land, on which Boltnaconnel House was built. This property descended undivided through several generations. About the middle of the eighteenth century William Montgomery was the representative of the family. He married, as his third wife, the sister of Sir Henry Montgomery, Baronet, of Londonderry, and had issue (1) William, (2) John, who later lived at Bunker's Hill, near Belfast; and (3) Archibald, of Boltnaconnel, a Lieutenant of Volunteers in 1778. The latter married Sarah Campbell, daughter of John Campbell, of Killealy.

This Sarah Campbell was the descendant of an early Scottish settler. Her ancestor was Hugh Campbell, of Oldstone. He was a member of the family of Duket Hall and Newmilns, Ayrshire, a junior branch of the house of Campbell of Loudoun. A John Campbell of Newmilns had been one of the "Lollards of Kyle" in 1494. Hugh Campbell, of Oldstone, was an intimate friend of Josias Welch, of Templepatrick, and married Welch's "brother's dochter," of whom Welch was guardian and trustee. Josias Welch, in his will, left Hugh Campbell four pounds sterling "in token of his love for him." According to Crozier, Hugh Campbell married a Miss Upton. The third son of Hugh was John, and his fourth child, also named John, was baptised in Antrim on October 6th, 1696, and married (1) Marjorie Lowrie, and (2) Miss Cunningham, of Crookedstone. From this second union sprang Sarah Campbell, born about 1736, who married Archibald Montgomery, of Boltnaconnel. They had a famliy, which included (1) William, (2) John, who married Mary Campbell, of Crookedstone (both William and John took part in the "Battle of Antrim," in 1798, and were subsequently pardoned); (3) Alexander, who married a Miss Neill; and Henry, who became the celebrated Henry Montgomery, LL.D., minister of Dunmurry, and who married Elizabeth, daughter of Hugh Swan, of Summerhill, Antrim, on April 6th, 1812.

The above-mentioned second son, John Montgomery, by his marriage with Mary Campbell, of Crookedstone, had a family, which included William, John,

Sarah, and five others. John became minister of Banbridge, and Sarah married George Cunningham, a descendant of another Ayrshire settler of the "Plantation" days. The issue of this marriage between George Cunningham and Sarah Montgomery included William Cunningham, Montgomery Cunningham, and six daughters. Of these Susan married Mr. Wright, and settled in Canada. Another married Joseph Gilmore, and became mother of George Cunningham Gilmore. Margaret is she whose loss we deplore. Another married (1) Mr. Garrett, and (2) Mr. Robert Murray, and became mother of Mrs. Fraser Lowry, the Misses Garrett, and Mrs. Bowen.

If we now go back to Alexander Montgomery, third son of Archibald Montgomery and Sarah Campbell, we find that, by his marriage with Miss Neill, he had four sons—James, Archibald, Henry, and Alexander—and six daughters. One of these six daughters married Mr. Pirrie, and became mother of Lord Pirrie. Another married John Carlisle, M.A., Head Master of the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, and became the mother of Lady Pirrie. Another married James Moore, and was mother of James Moore, of Finaghy. Another married J. R. Neill, and became mother of the wife of Rev. Thomas Dunkerley, of Comber.

The Rev. Henry Montgomery, LL.D., of Dunmurry, by his marriage with Elizabeth Swan, of Summerhill, Antrim, had four sons and six daughters. Many of these died young. One daughter married the Rev. John A. Crozier, A.B., Minister of Newry. She, by her previous marriage with Mr. Ash, became mother of Mrs. Kirker, wife of Archibald Montgomery Kirker, of Craigavad House, whose daughter is now Mrs. Kidd.

A sister of Dr. Montgomery had married John Kirker. Their son, John Kirker, of Kilcross, was father of Archibald Montgomery Kirker, John Kirker, and Mrs. James Davidson, wife of "Nimrod."

Mary Campbell, of Crookedstone, who married John Montgomery, and became grandmother of Miss Cunningham, lately deceased, was the daughter of a Miss Stephenson, who married a Campbell. This Miss Stephenson was a relative of the two Doctors Stephenson, father and son, who were distinguished Belfast physicians in their day. The elder Stephenson had been minister of Greyabbey before taking up the practice of medicine.

Miss Cunningham was a life-long member of the Old Presbyterian Congregation of Templepatrick. Though for many years she had not been able to attend its services, she nevertheless kept up a lively interest in all its affairs. Her interest in her church and in her friends never failed. Endowed with a keen memory, she remembered well all her connections, and to the last was kindly thoughtful in the way that had characterised her long life at Boltnaconnell.

Mr. N. A. CAMPBELL.

The death in a nursing home in Belfast on April 26 is announced, in his 80th year, of Mr. Nathaniel A. Campbell, formerly well known in local commercial circles, and for several years, in the "seventies," a member of the Belfast Town Council. Born in Crumlin, County Antrim, deceased was educated in Belfast, and after serving his apprenticeship to the furniture trade with Messrs. Longford & Carroll, commenced business on his own account about half a century ago. He was in business in Dublin, and later on in Cork, with the firm of John Daly. In the late sixties he commenced business in Donegall Place, Belfast, and for many years carried on an extensive trade in high-class furniture and carpets in the premises now occupied by the Ulster Bank. Later on he removed to Wellington Place, to premises occupying the site of the present Y.M.C.A. buildings. He also built a factory in May Street, where he carried on the manufacture of household furniture. In the early nineties he left Belfast for London, and became a director of the Bath Cabinetmakers' Company, with an office in Berners Street, Oxford Street. This position he continued to

hold until five or six years ago. Few men were better known, or more personally popular in local commercial circles. He was one of those Unitarian Liberals who, at the period named, were a considerable force in the mercantile community in Belfast, and did their share in building up trade enterprise. Possessing a genial manner, combined with shrewd common sense, Mr. Campbell was liked and respected by all classes and creeds. As representative in the Council of St. George's Ward from 1870 to 1875, he took a keen interest in the development and improvement of the municipality. More than twenty-five years ago, he went to live in London, where he was one of the founders of the Ulster Association. Mr. Campbell came of a family, several members of which were ministers of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and it is interesting to note that the ministry of Templepatrick was in this family uninterruptedly for nearly of 100 years. Mr. Campbell married a daughter of the late Mr. J. Lipsey, of Holywood. Mrs. Campbell died in Southport on 16th March, 1916, after nearly 56 years of married life. Of a family of fourteen children there are six surviving—three sons and three daughters. One son, Nathaniel, is in business in Melbourne, Australia. Another, Henry Montgomery, is serving with the Australian forces. He has been through the campaign in Gallipoli, where he was wounded, and is now in France, where he was wounded a second time. The third surviving son, Herbert, is in the Australian force serving in Palestine. The eldest daughter is the wife of Captain William Gowan, of Capetown. Another is married to Mr. William Pitfield, and lives in Southport. The youngest is the wife of Dr. J. H. Burridge, of Slough, surgeon to the V.A.D. Hospital in that town. Mr. Campbell's health had been failing since the death of his wife. He was for a time in a private hospital in Southport, and in November last came to a private hospital in Belfast, where he was under the care of his nephews and Dr. D. J. M'Kinney. Two of the most distinguished surgeons in the North of Ireland—Mr. John Campbell, F.R.C.S., Eng., and Mr. Robert Campbell, F.R.C.S., Eng.—are nephews of the deceased.

Mrs. S. C. DAVIDSON.

The death took place on Tuesday evening, 30th April, with painful suddenness, of Mrs. S. C. Davidson, wife of the founder and managing director of Davidson & Co., Ltd., Sirocco Works, Belfast, and Seacourt, Bangor. Mrs. Davidson's health was severely affected by the loss of her only son, Captain J. S. Davidson, of the Ulster Division, who fell on the glorious 1st of July, 1916, but she continued her activities in war work and local benevolent effort, and on Tuesday attended as a shareholder the general meeting of the firm, subsequently making a tour of the works, and manifesting a keen personal interest in the many developments that have recently taken place in that important concern. Later on she motored to the city in company with Sir Charles Brett, and having lunched and transacted some shopping business returned to Bangor by the 4-25 train, walking home from the station, and joining her daughter (Mrs. Hadow) and grandchild at afternoon tea. At this stage Mrs. Davidson was bright and cheery, and apparently in her usual health. She subsequently went to her sitting room upstairs about six o'clock, and put a match to the fire, and it is assumed that on rising from the stooping position which this involved she fell backwards on the floor. When Mr. Davidson went upstairs to the sitting-room he found her in a totally unconscious state. The fire which she had lighted was at this time only very partially ignited, which indicated that the sad occurrence could only have taken place a few minutes previously. The family physician, Dr. Darnell, was immediately called in, but pronounced life extinct, and expressed the view that death had been both instantaneous and painless. To Mr. S. C. Davidson, to his daughters (Mrs. Hadow and

Mrs. MaGuire), and to all friends and relatives, the condolence of the community in general will be extended in their irreparable loss and great bereavement.

LESSON NOTES FOR TEACHERS.

To be used in accordance with the Scheme of Biblical Instruction prepared by the S. S. Committee of the N.S.P.C.I. for 1918.

2ND JUNE.—*Paul re-visits the New Churches* (*2nd Journey*). Read Acts xv. 30, xvi. 5. Key Text, Acts xvi. 5.

1. *Joy in Antioch at the result of Paul's fight for freedom.* As we have already learnt, Antioch in Syria was the centre of Gentile Christianity. There the mission to the Gentiles originated, and there the followers of Jesus were first called Christians. If Paul had not won his main points, then either the Christian Church would have lost almost all its converts, or else there would have been a schism. Fortunately the spirit of give and take displayed by all parties led to the Church remaining one and continuing in fruitfulness ; so that Paul's return to Antioch was the occasion of great rejoicing. To help the younger children understand the point, take the case of an acorn planted in a small pot and one planted in the wide earth. The former grows to a small plant, and then either dies or smashes the pot, the latter having room to develop great roots becomes a mighty oak. So the Judaising Christians wanted to keep the seed of Christianity in a little pot, *i.e.*, within the narrow limits of their prejudices and selfishness, whilst Paul wanted to plant it in the wide world of humanity, and thus give it scope to spread and reform the world. *To be good Christians we must go outside ourselves ; we must be ready to shed joy and goodness on others.* We must not be like the snail, shut up in a narrow shell, but like the rose, must spread and blossom, and shed our fragrance far and wide.

2. *Dispute between Paul and Barnabas.* A little while ago we noticed how John Mark deserted the two great Gentile missionaries when they embarked on their big scheme of spreading the Gospel to all mankind. Barnabas wished to take John Mark (who evidently had come to see things a little differently) with them on their second journey. Paul would not give way. Perhaps his objection to John Mark was not merely due to resentment, but to the feeling that a half-hearted helper would spoil the work. We can admire Paul for his wise policy ; but also Barnabas for his willingness to receive John Mark back again. It is a pity that these two great men should have been separated, but fortunately Paul seems to have found an excellent companion in Silas.

3. *To Confirm the Churches.* Paul's second journey was to go over the old ground again to confirm his converts in their faith. Here is an illustration of the fact that if we wish a good thing to live, we must tend it until it has taken firm root. Thus, if we just plant seeds in a garden and never look at them again, the chances are that they will do no good. They need to be watered, to be sheltered from the keen wind, and other attentions until their roots are assured. So also, if we want to help those we love, we need to be ever-ready and watchful, or else our good intentions will wither away. Paul had sowed the seed, and he now went back to water it.

4. *Paul Circumcises Timothy.* Circumcision was a ceremony which every Jew had to submit to. It was this ceremony which Paul's opponents wished to impose on his Gentile converts, much as they objected to it. Paul was able to save the Gentiles from this ceremony, and thus preserved them to the Christian Church. It seems strange, therefore, that Paul should have circumcised one of his own converts. He did this for two reasons : (1) Timothy was half a Jew by birth, and had no objection to the ceremony ; (2) It was Paul's policy always to conciliate the Jews whenever he could without sacrificing his principles, which was that no man's conscience should be forced. (See 1st Cor. ix. 20, 21. Timothy was one of Paul's greatest helpers throughout his life.

9th JUNE.—*The Call to Macedonia.* Read Acts xvi. 6–22. Key Text, Acts xvi. 9.

1. *The Guidance of the Holy Spirit.* The most striking thing about Paul, as also about all great religious teachers, is their perfect trust in God's power to guide them aright. Paul and Silas wished to diverge into Asia. (N.B.—"Asia" does not mean the whole continent nearest to Europe). But the Holy Spirit kept them going straight ahead until they came to Troas, opposite to Macedonia. There Paul saw a vision which called him across the sea to continue his great work there. For simplicity we can interpret the Holy Spirit as *conscience.* Paul felt within himself a command to go right ahead, and he was not afraid to trust himself to this guidance, even though knew not what lay ahead. But when he felt the call—the call from Macedonia—he knew that he was on the right track, and found a glorious field of work open before him. The point is, that when you have a guide, you must trust that guide. Thus, sometimes when one is walking over some wild mountain land, he sees a smooth path and wants to take it. But the guide says "no, you must come over this broken ground with me, and then we shall find an even better path." So in our lives, we often want to do the easy thing, although our conscience tells us we ought to do the difficult and unpleasant thing. If we trust our conscience we shall eventually find ourselves leading a better and happier life than if we went against it.

2. *Troas,* a Roman colony in the N.W. corner of Asia Minor, with only a narrow strip of sea separating it from Europe. It was quite close to the ancient city of Troy, where great battles were fought between the Greeks and Trojans in the Trojan war.

3. *Macedonia,* a very important European province north of Greece. By going to Macedonia Paul began the great work of spreading Christianity throughout Europe.

4. *Samothrace,* an island midway between Troas and Macedonia.

5. *Neapolis,* a European port near to Macedonia.

6. *Philippi,* one of the most considerable cities in Macedonia. On arrival here Paul soon set about his work. He could find no synagogue, because the Jews in this town were few in number. But he found a small Jewish place of prayer, and quickly made converts among some of the Greek women who had adopted Judaism, chief of whom was Lydia.

7. *The Prophesying Slave Girl.*—This girl had a sort of second sight, and this gift was used by her masters for making money by telling people's fortunes. But although they tried to pervert her gift to bad purposes,they were thwarted, for immediately she saw Paul she felt most keenly his great spiritual power and proclaimed him to be God's messenger. Paul took pity on her, and restored her to natural health, but, so doing, deprived her of her dangerous gift. Her masters, however, cared nothing about the girl's health. All they wanted was to make money out of her, and therefore they stirred up the authorities against Paul and Silas N.B. —In this case it was not the Jews who persecuted, but men who prided themselves on being Roman citizens. They called Paul and Silas Jews because they did not trouble to distinguish between Jews and Christians.

8. For elder scholars. *N.B., verse* 10. Here begin the famous "we" passages. Instead of "they did this," we read, "we did this." The presumption is that Luke, the physician, who is generally held to be the author of Acts, was actually travelling with Paul whenever the second person isused.

16th JUNE.—*Paul at Athens.* Read Acts xvii. 16–34. Key Text, Acts xvii. 20.

Introduction.—Paul did magnificent work in Macedonia, but after leaving Philippi he soon found himself confronted by many Jewish opponents, who made matters so dangerous for him that he had to leave Macedonia. The risk for Paul personally was so great that his friends carried him away alone, and brought him to Athens. There he was to stay awhile until Silas and Timothy could rejoin him. Once

again we see Paul's greatness in seizing an opportunity.

1. *Athens.*—This was the greatest seat of learning and culture in the whole world, and no doubt Paul thought at first that there would be little chance of his gospel of Jesus of Nazareth getting a hearing from the learned Athenians, wise in their own conceit. But two facts soon struck his keen eye: (1) The great mass of the people still had no religion save that of idol worship. There were idols and images everywhere of all sorts of gods and goddesses—of images of those who ruled the stars, the crops, the woods; gods and goddesses for sailors, for shepherds, for mothers, for children, and a host of others. (2) But even though they had no knowledge of the one true God, their wise men had a dim feeling that behind all these idols and images there was a universal power; therefore they had set up an image to "Unknown God." (For *elder scholars.*—There were two main groups of philosophers at Athens—the Epicureans and Stoics—who, despite many differences, were agreed in holding that man had no direct relation with God. The most they would admit was, as we have seen, the shadowy existence of "Unknown God.") This gave Paul his *opportunity.* He began reasoning with the clever Athenians, who, although they despised him, calling him a babbler, were always ready to hear some new thing—not in order to learn, but to be amused. So they brought Paul to the Areopagus to speak.

2. The *Areopagus,* or Mar's Hill, was the most famous spot in Athens, as at one time the great Councillors of Athens used to meet there to decide on matters of state. This council still existed, but was not so important as it had been.

3. *Paul's sermon.*—It is a splendid example of seizing an opportunity. Paul made "the unknown god" the basis of his sermon, declaring that he could tell them about the mighty power behind all things. It was God, the Father, the God of Love, revealed in Jesus Christ, who by His Eternal Spirit links us to Him for all eternity. N.B.—Verse 22—It is better to read "somewhat religious" rather than "too superstitious." Paul would not go out of his way to insult his audience.

4. *Result of his preaching.* — Those who were wise in their own conceits mocked him, but some believed, including Dionysius, a member of the great Aeropagite Council. Thus did the gospel of the Carpenter of Nazareth win adherents, even in the learned and sceptical city of Athens.

23rd JUNE.—*Trials and Victory at Corinth.* Read Acts xviii. 1–17. Key Text, 2nd Cor. iv. 17.

1. *Corinth.* Just as Athens was famous as a centre of learning, Corinth was famous as a centre of commerce. It was the centre of Roman administration for the province of Achaia. Paul had ventured to preach Christ to the great Athenian philosophers, now he was to try the effect of his gospel on the enterprising and often unscrupulous traders of Corinth.

2. *Aquila, the Jew, and his wife, Priscilla.* They had left Rome, because the Roman Emperor had expelled all Jews from that city. The reason for this was, so far as we can tell, that some unknown Christians had already reached Rome, and the Jews had made so much disturbance against them that the authorities expelled Jews and Christians alike in order to preserve the peace. Aquila was not actually a Christian, but evidently he was most friendly disposed towards the new teaching. This and the fact that he was a tent-maker would account for Paul, also a tent-maker, lodging with him.

3. *Paul as a Tent-maker.* In those days there were so many religious quacks going about, using religion for no other purpose than to make money, that Paul, in order to prove his genuineness refused to accept any money except what he could earn as a tent-maker. It was the custom for every Jewish youth to be brought up to some useful trade, so that he would never become dependent on charity so long as he had health and strength.

4. *Silas and Timothy* rejoined Paul here, and then the great Apostle began a campaign in the Jewish synagogue. As usual, the great bulk of the Jews

opposed him, so that Paul was driven to preach his good tidings outside the synagogue to the Gentiles. But he had one big success. Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, with all his house believed. Yet so keen was the opposition, that Paul might have despaired if he had not been strengthened by God in a vision. "Be not afraid, but speak." Read key text (2nd Cor. iv. 17), to see how Paul regarded his difficulties. He is a fine example for all those who wish to do good, showing by word and deed that if anything is worth doing, it does not matter how much we suffer. So he abode for a year and a half amid great difficulties, doing his noble work.

5. *Gallio, the Pro-Consul of Achaia.* There is something very fine about this ruler. He was put there by the Romans to execute justice. Therefore, when the Jews dragged Paul before him, asking him to punish him simply because he did not hold the same religious opinions as they did, they received a severe check. Gallio was not concerned with a man's opinions. His business, he declared (verse 14) was whether a man did right or wrong. Paul had done no wrong, therefore he dismissed the whole business, and all the Jews got for their bigotry was that the annoyed Corinthians, taking their cue from Gallio, gave Sosthenes, the Jewish leader, a good thrashing for trying to injure an innocent man. Gallio teaches us the lesson that all men have a right to hold their own religious opinions without being made to suffer in any way. The test is, *how do they behave?* If we wish to prove ourselves good Christians, we shall try to show that we are better behaved, are purer, nobler, kinder, and more helpful than those round about.

30th JUNE.—Review. E. H. P.

Reports.

Ballee.—Recently, under Unitarian auspices, in Ballee National School, with Rev. J. H. Bibby, of Ballee, in the chair, Rev. R. Philipson, of Downpatrick, delivered to a large audience an interesting illustrated lecture on "Robert Burns," the proceeds being in aid of St. Dunstan's Hostel for Blinded Soldiers and Sailors.

Mr. Philipson sketched the 37 years of sorrow and struggle, which, with one or two brief gleams of prosperity, made up Burns's span of life; and, as an Englishman, while recognising the poet's human frailties, he paid tribute to his glorious humanity, and the versatility of his genius, as expressed in his immortal verses.

A story is told of how at a certain place in Germany—not the Prussianised Germany of to-day—in a company of critics who were weighing the claims and estimating the rank of the poets, their contemporaries, the leader of their chorus, Jean Paul Richter, is said to have hushed his audience when the name of Goethe was introduced, exclaiming, "We are not to sit in judgment on that sacred head." In the words of Professor Nichol, Scotsmen are apt to attach the same half-superstitious reverence to the name which is more than any other that of Scotland condensed in a personality. And it might even be said that in rural Lecale, quite as much as in Scotland, Burns exercises a peculiar ascendency over the minds and hearts of the people; to them the bard and his work are breathing and potent realities.

So the night with Burns at Ballee was fully enjoyed. The singers were—Miss Gibson, of Downpatrick, and Corporal Hughes, of Down Infirmary; the pianist, Mr. R. M'Cullen, of Ballee; the lantern operator, Mr. R. I. Chambers, of Downpatrick.

Thanks are due to Rev. J. H. Bibby for generous provision of piano, and also for the school-room, which Mr. Barnes and his pupils had made ready, and in whose hands the sale of tickets had brought forth the sum of over £12 for St. Dunstan's. The lecture was repeated subsequently at Woodgrange Orange Hall, Mr. Day Nesbitt in the chair, when Mr. Andrew Foote, of Tyrella, greatly enhanced the evening with powerful and dramatic readings from Burns.

Ballyhemlin.—Seaman's Apprentice, from whose letters we have already given extracts, gives his impressions of the Unitarian or Free Protestant Church at Capetown. It is a small church, built in among warehouses in a side street. The congregation seems good, and the choir is excellent, also the organ. The church is just a square house, with a balcony at the lower end, and the whole of the upper end on a slightly raised platform, with the organ, which is square, in one corner, and rather taking up the whole of one end, a space in the middle where the lectern is (there is no pulpit), and on the other side the choir-pews, and on to the congregation. The service is very similar to ours, and Mr. Balmforth is a very good, though rather serious, preacher.

"A jolly young Kaffer gent., whom I talk to on the quay, tells me he paid 'ten cattle for um missus.' They are dressed in rags, and most of them sport bare feet. One man, who has received a black eye from his wife, signed on as single for spite, although, as far as I can see, he will only get his other blinker blocked for his pains. Capetown is a pretty lively place, but not up to much in anything particular. There are five niggers to every four whites, and most people yabble Dutch. All menial labour is done by Kaffirs, who work all the first twenty years or so of their lives, from about ten years old to thirty, that is, till they save up enough money to buy a wife."

* *

Banbridge Unitarian Church—Young People's Guild.—On Wednesday, April 3rd, a party of wounded soldiers from Bann Vale Hospital, Gilford, were entertained in the Dunbar Schools by members of the above Guild. The men, who were in charge of Staff-Sergeant Palmer and several nurses, were cordially welcomed by Rev. J. Glynne Davies and Mrs. Davies and other members of the Guild. A very substantial tea was partaken of by all present, to the number of fifty-six, after which the soldiers were entertained with games, dances, and amusing competitions for which prizes were presented by Miss Smyth, Milltown, and Mrs. M'Cammon, Riverview. The prizes were handed to the successful competitors by Mrs. M'Cammon and Miss A. M'Caw. Following this several popular choruses were sung by the company, the accompaniments being played by Miss Saidie M'Keown and Mr. J. M. Finney. At 7 p.m. members of the congregation and friends of the soldiers arrived to listen to the evening's programme. Many of the soldiers rendered items, which were heartily applauded by the large audience present. The programme was as follows:—Song, Mrs. M'Cammon; song, Private Bradshaw; recitation, Miss Florence Knight; duet, Mrs. Allen and Miss Shanks; chorus, "The Gondolier," by members of the Guild; recitation, Staff-Sergeant Palmer; song, Sergeant Lynch; duet, Miss Shanks and Rev. J. G. Davies; song, Private Ballagh; song, Sergeant Gannan; song, Rev. J. G. Davies; sketch, "The Colonel's Consent," by members of the Dramatic Society, under the direction of Mr. Stanley P. Bell, those taking part being—Misses G. Watts, G. Kerr; Messrs. S. P. Bell, G. Radcliffe, and W. J. Bell-Radcliffe. At 9 p.m. supper was provided for all present, after which Staff-Sergeant Palmer voiced the feelings of the men in thanking the young people for giving them such a splendid entertainment. They would carry with them happy memories of the kindness shown to them by the Young People's Guild. He thanked them heartily for the warmth of their welcome. Messrs. A. M'Cammon and Gordon Martin very kindly supplied the men with plenty of "smokes" during the evening, and before they departed the Rev. J. G. Davies, on behalf of the Guild, presented to each man a packet of cigarettes. The men who were too ill to leave the hospital were not forgotten. A box of cakes and a supply of cigarettes were sent to them also. A very happy and successful evening was brought to a close by the singing of the National Anthem. The accompanists at the concert were Mrs. M'Cammon, Mrs. Davies, Miss Saidie

M'Keown, and Mr. J. M. Finney. Great credit is due to the young people for the hearty and enthusiastic manner in which they worked to make the whole evening a success. The young ladies deserve special praise—they gave so cheerfully and generously of their means and time. Mrs. Bell very efficiently superintended the preparation of the tea and coffee. Our deepest gratitude is due to all who helped to make this tangible expression of our esteem to the men who have fought and suffered for us, a worthy one, and it was evident that the men were deeply touched by the kindness of all to them.

* *

Belfast—First Church.—On the invitation of the Rev. H. J. and Mrs. Rossington the ladies of this congregation met in the Central Hall to review the work of the last two and a half years and arrange for its continuance in the immediate future. A collection made once a month (in addition to the usual church collection) has realised £104 10s. 4d. for the Red Cross Fund. A Comforts Fund was also organised. A committe of ladies meets once a month in the Central Hall to receive comforts for soldiers and sailors, which they send direct to wherever special need is reported to them. Up to date over 2,040 articles have been sent off. In addition to these new articles, for several months past the ladies have done much repair work for the U.V.F. Hospital. In connection with this fund a shilling circle was formed, members contributing at least one shilling each month to raise money to buy wool, which is given to those members who can give time but cannot afford to buy materials. Mr. Rossington stated that up to date he had received £100 13s. for this. Each winter it was decided to make a " special effort," and by this £481 10s. was handed over to Sir Arthur Pearson in 1915 for men blinded in the war, and £643 12s. 11d. to Sir Robert Liddell in 1917 for the Belfast Limbless Hospital; and Mrs. Hume, hon. treasurer of this Committee, said she had great pleasure in stating that she had now £418 9s. 10d. to hand over to Mrs. Barr at the Old Town Hall for our prisoners, this making a total of £1,543 12s. 9d. raised during three winters for these special objects. The various reports were cordially received, and arrangements made to carry on the work.

* *

Downpatrick.—Second-Lieut. Percival Godding preached in Downpatrick on Sunday with much acceptance. He is Unitarian minister at Ballyclare, Co. Antrim, joined the Army as a cadet some time ago, and when lately stationed at Ballykinlar preached for Rev. J. D. Davies at Clough, and also at his mission station, Ballykilbeg. He goes overseas with the 20th Royal Irish Rifles. We wish him God-speed and good luck.

At Communion Service on May 19th, the Minister announced that our roll of junior members, which was commenced a short time ago, now numbered 57, and he thought it a splendid testimony to the influence and training of their late venerated Pastor, Rev. M. S. Dunbar, M.A., that these young people were so ready to enrol themselves. The junior membership is based upon the scheme, so successfully inaugurated by Rev. H. J. Rossington, of Rosemary Street. Rev. Philipson having taken as his text: " Ye are the body of Christ," (1st Cor. xii. 27), spoke appropriately of this new movement, his desire to bring home to the young people their responsibilities to their Church, and the sacred privilege in which they were called to be the instruments of God, and " the body " through which Christ's teaching could be expressed to-day. The list of names was then read, and mention made of the enthusiastic work of the Junior Roll.

A Special Evening Service will be conducted in this church by Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter (late Principal of Manchester College, Oxford), on Friday evening, June 14th, 1918, at 8 o'clock, when sacred solos will be rendered by Madame Bella Ewen, of Glasgow and Belfast. It is just 13 years since Dr. Carpenter's last visit to us, and we would remind our readers of the rich opportunity of hearing this gifted preacher.

Holywood.—The Annual Sunday School Prize Distribution took place on Sunday, May 5th. In spite of bad weather on the preceding days, the scholars managed to bring a goodly supply of flowers, which, together with the collection, were forwarded to the Belfast Hospital for Sick Children. Mrs. Gardiner, in presenting the prizes, gave some interesting reminiscences of her own Sunday School days. The certificates gained at the Sunday School examination were also presented.

On Saturday, June 15th, we are having a Sale of Work in the Holywood Town Hall, in aid of our Music Fund. It is eight and a half years since our last Sale, and we hope to see many friends present from Belfast and neighbouring congregations. The Sale will be opened at 3 o'clock by Mrs. Kelly, of Dunmurry, and the chair is to be taken by the Rev. Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter. President of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. The Blue Bird Orchestra will play selections during the afternoon and evening, and there will be half-hour concerts and various side-shows in addition to the usual stalls. Fancy work and all sorts of useful articles will be offered at reasonable prices, and refreshments will be obtainable. The Unity Guild has arranged to visit Holywood on the day of the Sale, and we hope they will be accompanied by a large number of friends.

* *

Newry.—The Annual Meeting of the members of this church was held on the 28th April, Rev. Geo. J. Slipper, minister of the congregation, presiding. Mr. R. J. M'Combe, hon. secretary, read the report of the Committee, from which it appeared that there had been fourteen additions to the membership during the past year, notably amongst the younger members of families long associated with the church, whilst by death and removal five had gone, thus leaving a net gain of nine. Some of the members had increased their stipend by over £5, and the Sunday collections had also increased slightly. The attendance at the Sunday School was well maintained, and the teachers continued to attend regularly. The Committee recorded with great regret "the demise of Mrs. Thompson, widow of the late Mr. John Thompson, and one whose devotion to the church was beyond the estimate of words; also of Mrs. Hutchinson, a member of a family long associated with the congregation. Both ladies showed a generous and warm interest in the church, and their loss is deeply deplored." Mr. C. Warnock, treasurer, read his report, which showed that the total amount received during the year was £252 os. 4d., which cleared all liabilities, and left a small balance to be carried forward. The chairman moved the adoption of the report and statement of accounts, and in doing so, said it was gratifying to all concerned that the congregational affairs were in such a healthy state. They had all passed through a most strenuous time owing to the horrible war that was raging in France and elsewhere, in which many of their congregation and friends were engaged. He hoped that this year would see the end of it, and that a lasting peace would be gained by our Allies. He was pleased to state that the members of the Young People's Guild had, as in previous years since the war broke out, sent parcels of comforts to every soldier connected with the congregation at Christmas; he was also happy to state that no further casualties had occurred to any members of the church who were out in France. He welcomed the presence of Signaller S. D. Pinkerton, R.N., son of the late Rev. S. Cordner Pinkerton, B.A., a former minister of the congregation, who was home on a short furlough after having been in the naval battle during the previous week off Zeebrugge, and concluded with the hope that the progress of the church would be steadily maintained during the present year. Mr. John M'Combe seconded the motion, which was adopted. On the proposition of Mr. Walter Scott, the Congregational Committee of last year was reappointed. Votes of thanks having been passed to Mrs. Slipper (organist) and the choir for their services, and the members of the Committee, the proceedings terminated.

Raloo.—A Sale of Work, in aid of the funds of the Raloo Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, will be held in the Temperance Hall, Gleno, on 21st and 22nd June.

* *

Syria and Palestine Relief Fund.—Our congregation at Cairncastle, per Rev. Eustace Thompson, contributed the sum of £4 to this fund, and our congregation at Dunmurry, per Rev. J. A. Kelly, the sum of £4 2s.

(Communications, including B.E.F. in East Africa, have unavoidably been held over.)

DEATH.

YOUNG—At the Bridgend, Templepatrick, on Saturday, 18th May, Fanny, daughter of Mr. S. Young. She entered into her rest at the age of 19 years. The interment took place in the Loanends Burying-ground on Monday, the 20th, Rev. A. Turner conducting service in the home and at the grave-side.

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